



Canadian Centre  
on Substance Use  
and Addiction

# Focused on the Future

Strategic Plan 2021–2026

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Evidence. Engagement. Impact.



[www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca)







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# About the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction

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Canadian policy makers and individuals need reliable information to make decisions about substance use. Since its creation by an Act of Parliament in 1988, CCSA has been a trusted and independent counsel on issues of substance use and addiction. For more than three decades, governments at all levels have turned to CCSA for the knowledge they need to navigate the complex issues surrounding legal and illicit drugs. They know they can rely on CCSA to provide the best advice based on objective evidence.

We reach beyond government to Canadians to prevent and mitigate the harms of substance use. We work in partnership with healthcare professionals, universities and colleges, as well as law enforcement, corrections agencies and first responders. We create specialized products in response to the needs identified by people who use substances. We also respond to the needs of youth allies such as teachers, coaches and counsellors, and the young people they serve.



**CCSA ensures that our work is inclusive and accurate. We inform our perspective by collaborating with people who have lived and living experience with substance use, as well as their friends and families.**

Our work covers substance use issues experienced by Canadians from all walks of life and across age groups, including older adults. We use a variety of lenses, including a sex-, gender- and diversity-based lens, to identify patterns in substance use prevalence and the experiences and outcomes of people who use substances so that our responses are informed by their unique circumstances. CCSA supports Indigenous-led solutions through respectful and open collaboration that recognizes the value of traditional knowledge and practices.

CCSA has helped foster the growth of a national network of partners, collaborating with experts and communities with diverse perspectives and expertise. Our work remains relevant to the field through dialogue with this network and, when we work together, we can truly effect change. No one organization or level of government will resolve the issues surrounding substance use; as such, we are committed to working with our partners and shining the spotlight on the latest and best evidence-informed work.



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# Executive Summary

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## Vision

A healthier Canadian society where evidence transforms approaches to substance use.

## Mission

To address issues of substance use in Canada by providing national leadership and harnessing the power of evidence to generate coordinated action.

## Values



Social  
Responsibility



Partnerships and  
Collaboration



Cultivate Knowledge  
and Strive for Objectivity



Integrity and  
Respect



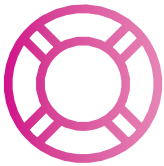
Excellence

## Value Proposition

CCSA was created by Parliament to provide national leadership to address substance use in Canada. As trusted counsel, we provide national guidance to decision makers by harnessing the power of research, curating knowledge and bringing together diverse perspectives.

## North Star Outcomes

Improved wellness for those experiencing the harms of substance use through:



An accessible, inclusive continuum of quality services and supports



Evidence-informed responses that reduce substance use harms

## Strategic Goals and Priorities



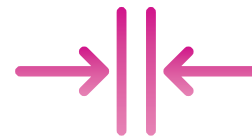
Advancing knowledge by synthesizing research

- Make evidence-informed resources easily accessible to key audiences
- Promote increased knowledge, understanding and awareness of substance use and addiction
- Monitor emerging trends and alert stakeholders



Driving collaboration efforts across Canada

- Mobilize collective efforts by connecting and convening stakeholders towards a common goal
- Shine a spotlight on initiatives in the P/Ts and communities



Bridging the gap between what we know and what we do

- Equip the substance use field with the knowledge it needs to respond effectively
- Serve as an amplifier for news and research related to substance use and addiction
- Inform policy makers on new research, leading practice and emerging issues



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# The System Challenges that CCSA Addresses

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**The Canadian Substance Use Costs and Harms (CSUCH) project has produced a foundational study for CCSA. Over the next five years, the project will provide regular and comprehensive estimates of substance use costs and harms in Canada.**

In 2017, the cost of substance use in Canada was almost \$46 billion (See Figure 1). The ability to track costs and trends in harms uniquely caused by specific substances is a valuable asset to government, business and advocacy group efforts aimed at reducing these harms. A better understanding of the societal costs associated with different substances can help inform policy, decision making and resource allocation for law enforcement, prevention, treatment and harm reduction services.





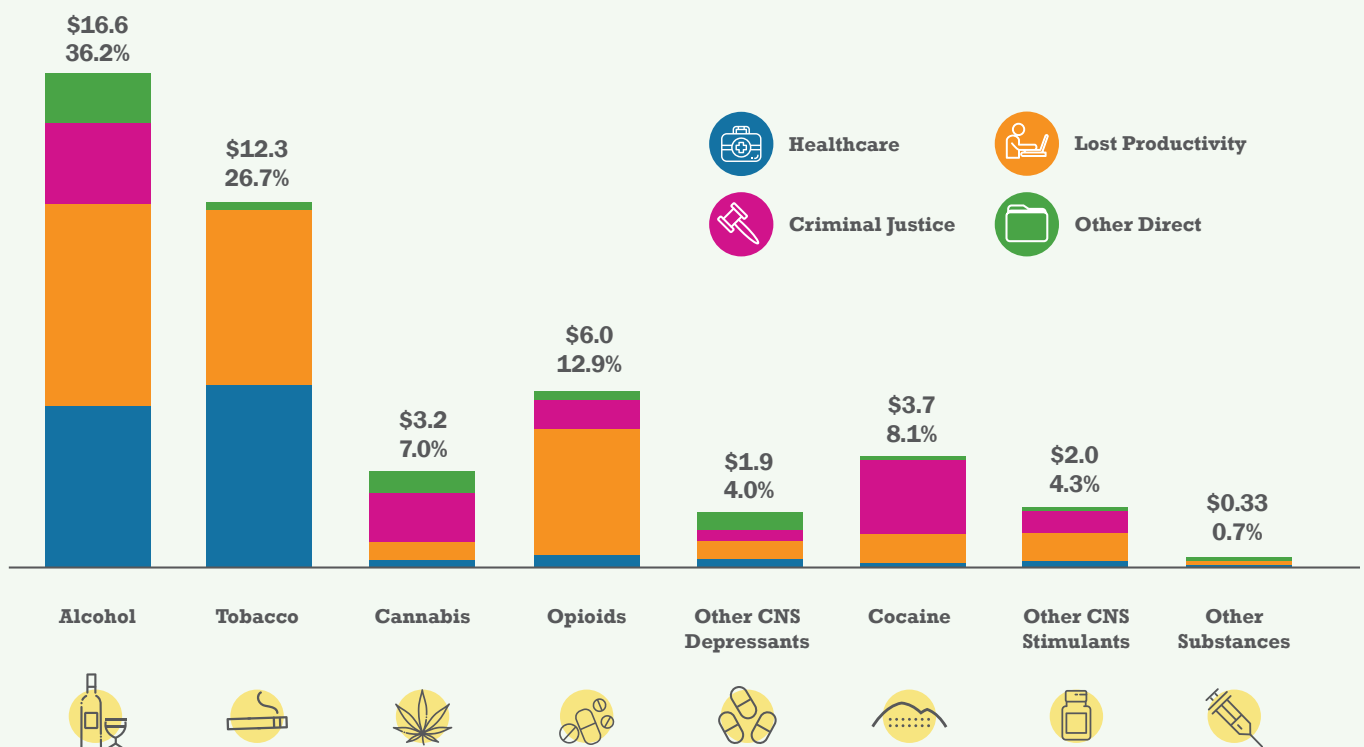
# **\$46 billion**

**Cost of substance use in Canada in 2017**

Developed through a rich partnership between the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction and the University of Victoria's Canadian Institute of Substance Use Research, the project team continues to enhance its methods and update the data based on consultations with partners and feedback from stakeholders.



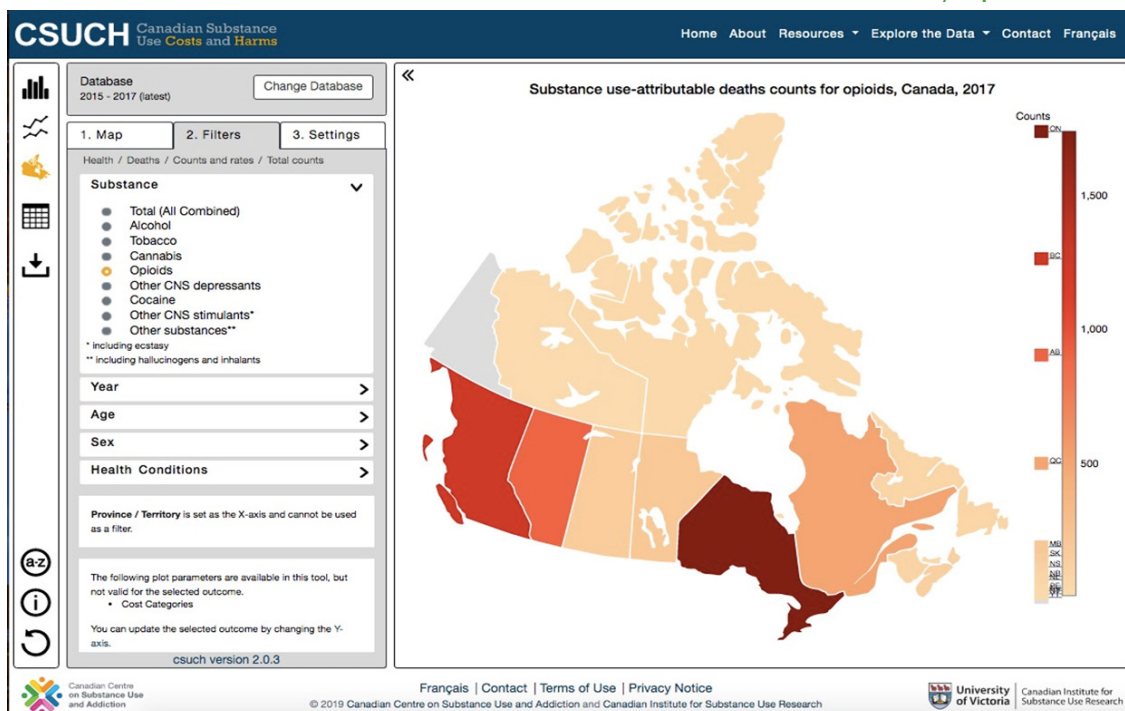
Figure 1. Costs (in billions) and percentage of total costs that can be attributed to substance use in Canada by substance and cost type, 2017



**Note:** These estimates do not include costs associated with inpatient hospitalization, day surgery and emergency department costs in the province of Quebec. In addition, these estimates do not include costs associated with lost productivity due to premature mortality in Yukon territory.

To accompany the national report on substance use costs and harms, we developed an online data visualization tool allowing users to explore the CSUCH estimates, and customize graphs and tables to suit their needs (i.e., for their jurisdiction, substance of interest or cost category of interest). The tool is interactive and accessible, with our team available to support individuals to maximize the tool’s effectiveness for their areas of interest.

[www.csuch.ca/explore-the-data](http://www.csuch.ca/explore-the-data)





## The Impact of Stigma



Creates barriers  
to seeking help  
or treatment



Leads to self-  
stigma, feelings  
of hopelessness  
and isolation



Reduces opportunities  
for housing, work,  
school or social  
activities



Increases bullying,  
physical violence or  
harassment

*CCSA is committed to sharing evidence on and ending the stigma around substance use within our community of influence.*

## Diverse Populations Affected

› **Children and Youth**

› **Homeless Individuals**

› **Indigenous Peoples**

› **Rural and Remote**

› **Seniors**

› **Workforce**

› **LGBTQIA2S+**

› **Gender-Diverse**

› **Diverse Race and Ethnicity**

*CCSA develops resources to address the needs of a wide range of individuals who use substances.*



## Continuity of Knowledge



Engagement with federal and 13 P/T governments



Coordination of public, private and not-for profit organizations



Those with lived and living experience of substance use



Inter-governmental and inter-departmental integration (i.e., health, public health, mental health, justice, social, employment)

*CCSA is recognized for its ability to convene across sectors, communities and policy areas to promote continuity of knowledge.*



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## A Message from Our Chair and Our CEO

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**Vaughan Dowie,**  
Chair



**Rita Notarandrea**  
Chief Executive Officer

We are pleased to present our new five-year strategic plan. *To Focus on the Future of CCSA*, we consulted with more than 240 people across the spectrum of our partners and stakeholders. We listened to leaders from government about their needs heading into this new decade. We spoke to people in direct service about treatment and harm reduction. And we consulted with a range of organizations representing individuals with lived and living experience with substance use.

**We listened and we learned. Now, we need to act.**

# 240

**Stakeholders consulted to inform the strategic planning process**

**You told us that knowledge mobilization to foster understanding and create awareness of substance use issues is at the centre of what you expect from CCSA.**

You want us to ensure that there is sufficient and thorough research being done in the field of substance use and addiction. You expect us to be your principal source for current resources, trends and research, including the work of others in the field. You asked us to make our evidence-informed publications and tools more accessible. You reaffirmed CCSA's role in creating and shining the spotlight on the best and emerging practices and research in the field, connecting and convening people and organizations around a common cause, and driving coordinated action and impact.

We heard clearly that the material we produce must be timely and relevant. We need to ensure that we hear from many different voices and tailor our resources for specific audiences. You told us that a key component of our success in mobilizing action and informing policy, at the provincial and territorial level and with others, is our status as an independent, neutral (non-partisan) and trusted third party. Our ongoing commitment to you is to provide balanced and unbiased work, rooted in science and evidence, and driven by compassion.



In addition to your feedback, we also based our strategic plan on an understanding of our rapidly evolving external environment. At the time of writing, we are in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic. During this crisis, the need for quick access to reliable information is crucial. The pandemic highlights the need for even more coordinated and timely action for effective responses to issues of substance use and addiction.

Our pandemic response team mobilized quickly and is leveraging existing communication platforms and resource repositories to disseminate reliable information. Our researchers and policy analysts developed evidence briefs related to substance use and addiction during a pandemic, and our knowledge brokers packaged this evidence into audience-specific tools and resources. We also initiated a series of public opinion polls and a national survey to examine the impact of the pandemic on substance use by Canadians. CCSA is maintaining its essential role as a convenor and connector for those who look to us for advice and support.

**Over the next five years, we will continue to do everything we can to realize CCSA's vision of a healthier Canadian society where evidence transforms approaches to substance use. We look forward to working with you to deliver this plan.**

Vaughan Dowie,  
Chair (Ontario)

Rita Notarandrea  
Chief Executive Officer

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# Introduction

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**Substance use disorders do not discriminate. They can affect anyone regardless of age, sex, gender, ethnicity, religion, education or socioeconomic status. They can be accompanied by other physical and mental health challenges. Researching direct-service delivery on addiction and substance use remains highly complex and ever changing.**

People in search of help face significant barriers to accessing treatment and support. Not only is the system fragmented and difficult to navigate, but those who use substances are often discriminated against due to stigma and pre-existing biases.

As Canada grapples with a devastating opioid crisis, which has claimed almost 13,000 lives since 2016, there are increasing access and capacity challenges across the continuum of prevention, harm reduction interventions and treatment. This issue has been exacerbated further as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic with a substantial spike in opioid-related deaths, particularly in the province of British Columbia, as a result.

**“I think CCSA is unique in terms of the role they serve as an advisor to so many healthcare institutions, universities, public health agencies, and the general public in Canada.”**

*Dr. Tony George, Professor of Psychiatry and Institute of Medical Sciences, University of Toronto*



# 13,000

People have died in Canada since 2016 as  
a result of the opioid crisis

(before the COVID-19 pandemic spike)

At the time of writing, we are also in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic which has upended our way of life, forced unforeseen pressures on our healthcare system, and left many people who use substances without access to services and supports.

As we *Focus on the Future*, CCSA continues to seek ways to reduce harms and improve the lives of those with lived and living experiences of substance use and addiction, as well as their friends and families. This strategic plan was created with the current context in mind. At the same time, we wanted to foresee what might be required of us in the future. Within this context, we conducted broad consultations with more than 240 stakeholders to re-evaluate CCSA's strategic goals and priorities for the next five years.





Our 2021–2026 strategic plan is based on CCSA’s strategic goals, which include:

- **Advancing knowledge by synthesizing research**
- **Driving collaboration efforts across Canada**
- **Bridging the gap between what we know and what we do**

Based on the feedback we heard from our partners across Canada, each goal has specific priorities to provide direction on where to focus our efforts, with the objective of achieving even greater results.

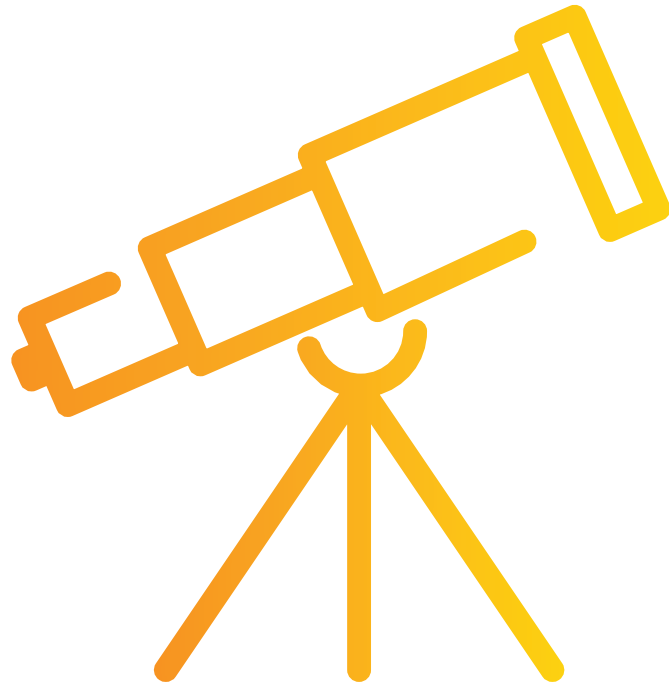
**We look forward to our continued work to achieve our vision of a healthier Canadian society, where evidence informs approaches to substance use. We know that by working together in a cohesive way, we can create a barrier-free system of services and supports to improve wellness for those experiencing the harms of substance use.**



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## CCSA's Strategic Plan

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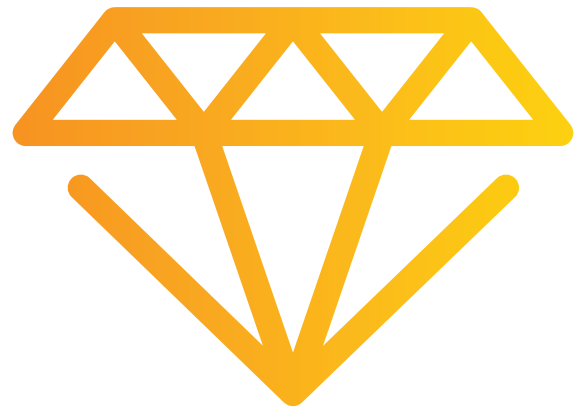
### Vision

A healthier Canadian society where evidence transforms approaches to substance use.



## Mission

To address issues of substance use in Canada by providing national leadership and harnessing the power of evidence to generate coordinated action.



## Value Proposition

CCSA was created by Parliament to provide national leadership to address substance use in Canada. As trusted counsel, we provide national guidance to decision makers by harnessing the power of research, curating knowledge and bringing together diverse perspectives.

# Our Values



## Social Responsibility

Dedicated to enriching the health and well-being of society.



## Partnerships and Collaboration

Dedicated to creating and nurturing partnerships to mobilize efforts, committed to inclusivity and building consensus, and focused on realizing a collective impact.



## Cultivate Knowledge and Strive for Objectivity

Committed to continuous learning, sharing information, viewpoints, ideas and practices, and using evidence to inform policy and practice and to guide action.



## Integrity and Respect

Committed to maintaining the trust of staff, partners and stakeholders by being accountable and transparent, and by treating all individuals with dignity and respect.



## Excellence

Devoted to enhancing the quality of our services, products and practices through continuous improvement and innovation.



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## The Engagement Process

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**At CCSA, strategic planning is a consultative process. We continually assess the complexities of the changing environment in which we operate by analyzing evidence and using this information to drive action and achieve the desired impact.**

As we looked toward the next five years and the framing of our strategic priorities, we sought advice and insight from our partners and stakeholders over a three-month external engagement process conducted by experts in this field.

The feedback we heard from across Canada and from our board and staff was honest and unvarnished. This consultation forms the foundation of both our strategic and business plans, and will ensure we stay connected to and on the leading edge of policy, practice and research on substance use and addiction. We will continue to listen, learn and act on this basis.



## How We Engaged

# 240+

Stakeholders Consulted Via



One-on-One Interviews



Focus Groups



Advisory Groups



Online Surveys

## Who We Engaged

› **People with Lived and Living Experience**

› **Other NGOs**

› **Indigenous Peoples**

› **Federal Government**

› **RCMP and Impaired Driving Experts**

› **Advisory Committees**

› **Other PCHOs**

› **Thought Leaders**

› **Provinces and Territories**

› **Board Alumni**

› **CCSA Staff**



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## North Star Outcomes

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CCSA's course over the next five years will be guided by two overarching outcomes. We know that the field of substance use and addiction is complex and uncertain; accordingly, these outcomes need to remain as constant and visible as the North Star.

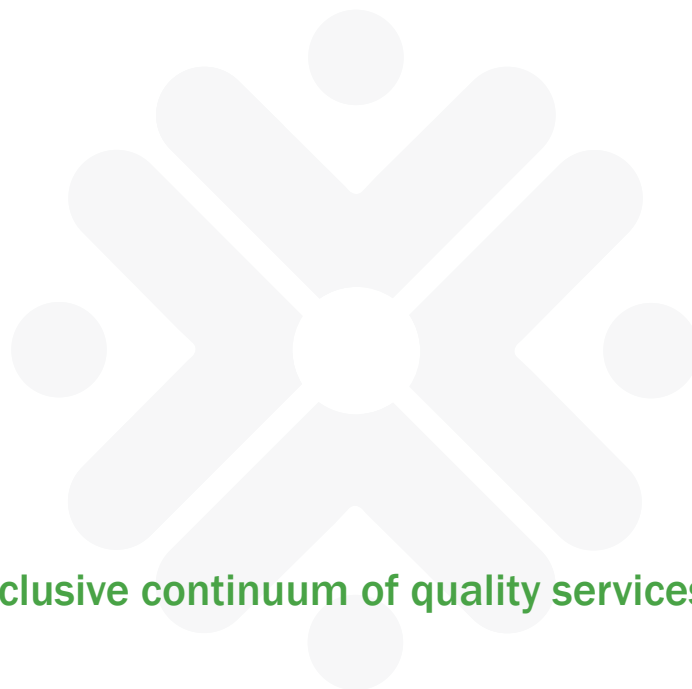
CCSA's North Star outcomes are founded upon CCSA's vision, mission and values, and inform our strategic goals and priorities. They are a beacon to guide our decision making toward what is possible if we all work together to improve wellness for those experiencing the harms of substance use:



An accessible, inclusive continuum of quality services and supports



Evidence-informed responses that reduce substance use harms



## An accessible, inclusive continuum of quality services and supports

People who use substances and those with a substance use disorder face systemic barriers to healing and well-being. Change is urgently needed. CCSA envisions a system where:

- Substance use disorder is seen as a health condition, like any other chronic health condition, and is given the attention it requires
- People who use substances are not subject to stigma
- Workforce capacity exists to deliver services along the continuum of care from prevention to harm reduction and recovery
- Policy, professional practice, upstream efforts and the system of care are based on what works
- Barriers to services are removed and access to care is equitable and available when it is needed most
- Health and well-being are recognized as unique to the individual, attainable and celebrated by all of us because we are all affected in some way





## Evidence-informed responses that reduce substance use harms

To achieve the greatest impact, CCSA must anticipate and respond to emerging trends in substance use and addiction. Timely and relevant responses and best advice must be rooted in the evidence that reliably informs all CCSA products and, in turn, the work of our partners. To effectively drive change, reduce harms and improve wellness, CCSA's products must remain of the highest quality, in a format that is easily understood by key audiences, and based on the most current knowledge. For responses to be effective, they must continue to be based on what works and on knowing what works.



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# Strategic Goals and Priorities

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## Advancing knowledge by synthesizing research

- › Make evidence-informed resources easily accessible to key audiences
- › Promote increased knowledge, understanding and awareness of substance use and addiction
- › Monitor emerging trends and alert stakeholders



## Driving collaboration efforts across Canada

- › Mobilize collective efforts by connecting and convening stakeholders towards a common goal
- › Shine a spotlight on initiatives in the P/Ts and communities



## Bridging the gap between what we know and what we do

- › Equip the substance use field with the knowledge it needs to respond effectively
- › Serve as an amplifier for news and research related to substance use and addiction
- › Inform policy makers on new research, leading practice and emerging issues

**“The CCSA provides family doctors with evidence summaries, infographics, and reports that are the gold standard in reliable information on substance use and addictions. Whether for clinical use, for teaching of our trainees, or on background for policy development or scholarly publication, the CCSA provides information that is highly reliable, well researched, and attractively presented.”**

*Dr. Jeff Sisler, Executive Director, Professional Development and Practice Support, College of Family Physicians Canada*



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## 2021–2026 Strategic Goals

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An effective strategic plan must consider the context in which an organization is operating: the environmental trends, the challenges and the opportunities for action. To avoid setting strategic goals and objectives in isolation, we reached out to our partners through an extensive engagement process that provided a unique and valuable perspective. Our partners confirmed our work as relevant and valued, while also suggesting specific improvements and identifying issues that require attention.

A common theme was the importance of fostering collaboration, in a variety of forms, to achieve impact. Our partners requested more frequent collaboration across networks and jurisdictions to more effectively bridge the gap between what we know and what we do. Accordingly, we adjusted the order of our strategic goals and how we define them to reflect this valuable feedback. Our three strategic goals are detailed in the following pages.

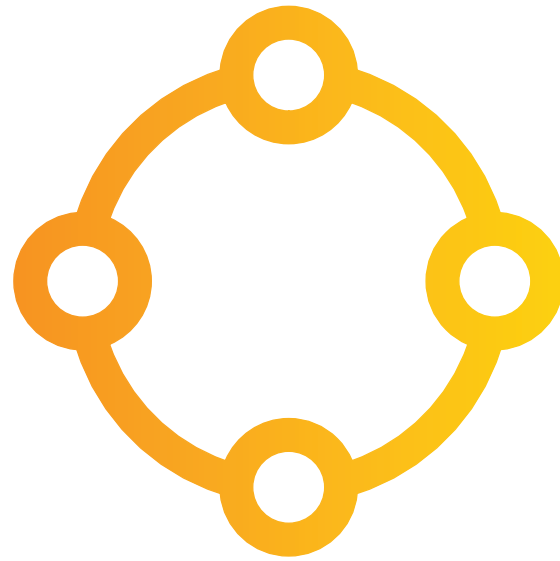




## Goal 1

### **Advancing knowledge by synthesizing research**

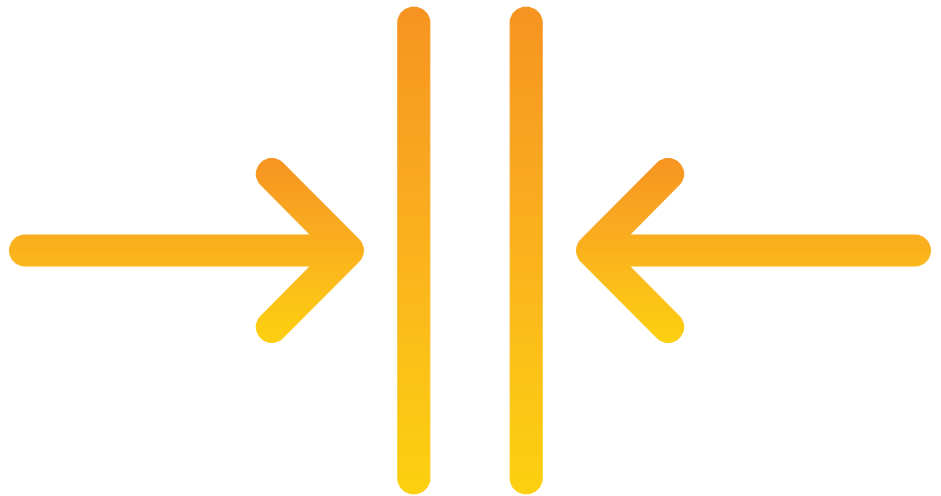
Help decision makers address substance use in Canada through CCSA studies, and by synthesizing research and data into a coherent, objective body of evidence that provides national guidance to inform policy and practice.



## Goal 2

### Driving collaboration efforts across Canada

Align efforts to address substance use through the national coordination of information and of diverse perspectives.



## Goal 3

### **Bridging the gap between what we know and what we do**

Be a first-stop access point for evidence-informed resources that are audience-specific and easily understood.

The achievement of these strategic goals will advance our North Star outcomes of an accessible, inclusive continuum of quality services and supports, and effective, evidence-based responses that reduce substance use harms.



## CCSA's goals are interconnected.

They form a continuous feedback loop of activities to inform the next steps: evidence, engagement, impact ... repeat.



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# 2021–2026 Strategic Priorities

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In response to the feedback, each goal has specific priorities that will become CCSA's touchstones to guide our activities over the next five years.

## Goal 1

### Advancing knowledge by synthesizing research

Over the next five years, CCSA will focus on the following three priorities:



## Make evidence-informed resources easily accessible to key audiences.

CCSA plays an important role as both a creator of rich, unique and innovative content, as well as a national aggregator of knowledge. CCSA harnesses the power of research by consolidating and organizing information and synthesizing material from a wide range of reputable sources.

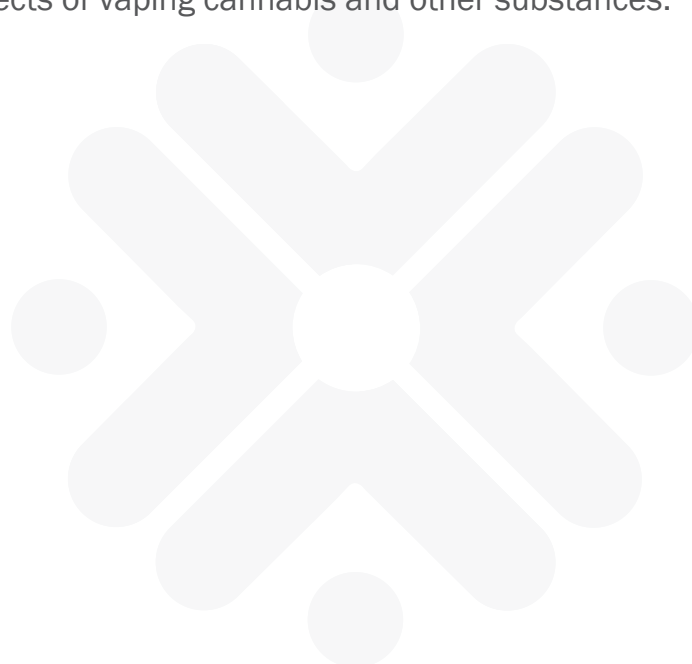
Canadians must be able to count on CCSA as an unbiased source of evidence that is timely and relevant to inform decisions. Policymakers also rely on CCSA for evidence-informed material.

## **Promote increased knowledge, understanding and awareness of substance use and addiction.**

Several existing and emerging issues are on CCSA's radar; some are a continuation of existing research and others are new or emerging. We are committed to generating leading-edge materials that reflect innovations found at the intersection of research and real-time discovery.

### **CCSA will continue its work on alcohol use and related illnesses, and its position as the leading cause of deaths and costs to the economy.**

Over the next five years, the legalization of cannabis will begin to affect consumption patterns and even attitudes toward the drug. We will provide the best evidence and advice on cannabis use and its effects on the population, and on emerging trends such as the health effects of vaping cannabis and other substances.





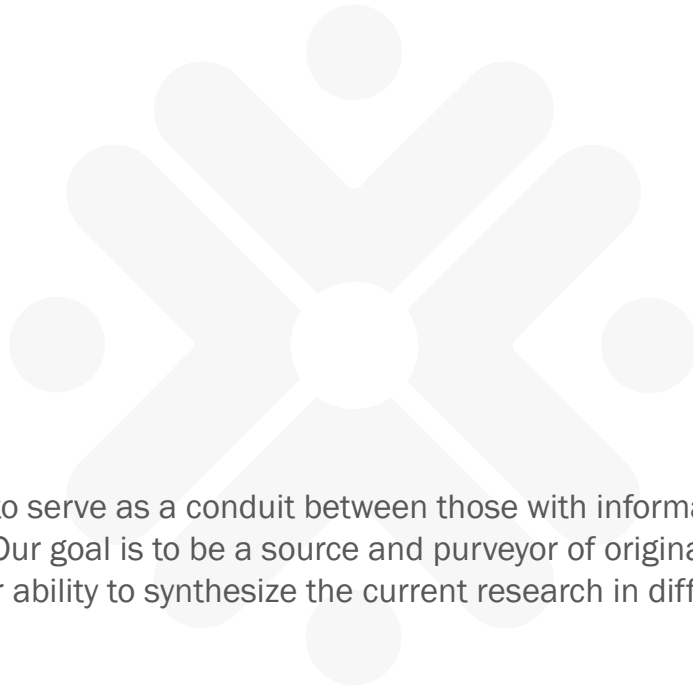
In addition, we will promote the best evidence on strategies to address the opioid and methamphetamine crises, polysubstance use disorder (e.g., alcohol and cannabis use) and concurrent disorders (e.g., the relationship between substance use and mental health). We will also research intersectional, gender- and diversity-specific impacts or trends in substance use to respond effectively and with greater understanding.

**Finally, we will promote evidence from across Canada and around the world on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people who use substances and those seeking treatment and supports. CCSA's work will contribute to preparing for future pandemics and other public health emergencies.**



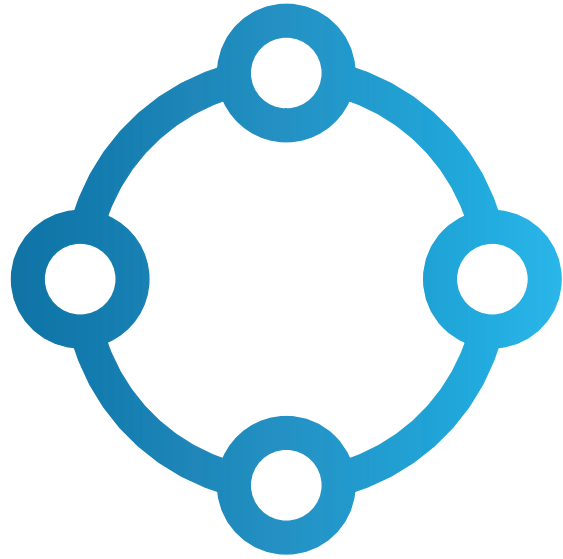
## **Monitor emerging trends and alert stakeholders.**

CCSA plays a leadership role in the Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (CCENDU). Through CCENDU, CCSA sounded the alarm on the emerging opioid and fentanyl crises in 2013. CCSA will play an even more active role in the early detection of emerging substance use trends. This on-the-ground early warning network, which exists in 10 urban centres across Canada, convenes stakeholders quickly to develop timely and coordinated responses.



CCSA will continue to serve as a conduit between those with information and those who need it. Our goal is to be a source and purveyor of original research, while increasing our ability to synthesize the current research in different areas of substance use.

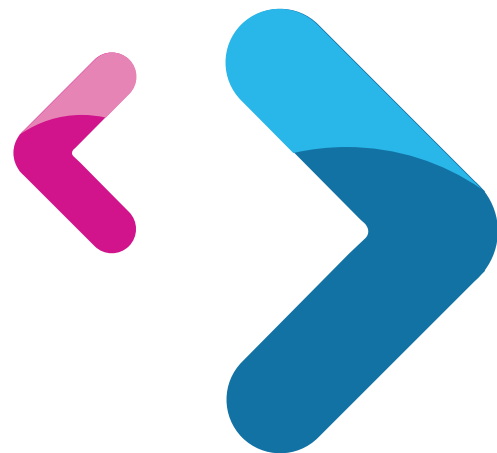
**Over the next five years, CCSA will maintain our well-developed network of existing connections and forge meaningful new relationships with other researchers and knowledge users, including contributing data to the Canadian Drugs and Substances Early Warning System. We will disseminate audience-specific, evidence-based material quickly and efficiently. We will also identify important research gaps to guide effective responses, services and supports in Canada.**



## Goal 2

### **Driving collaboration efforts across Canada**

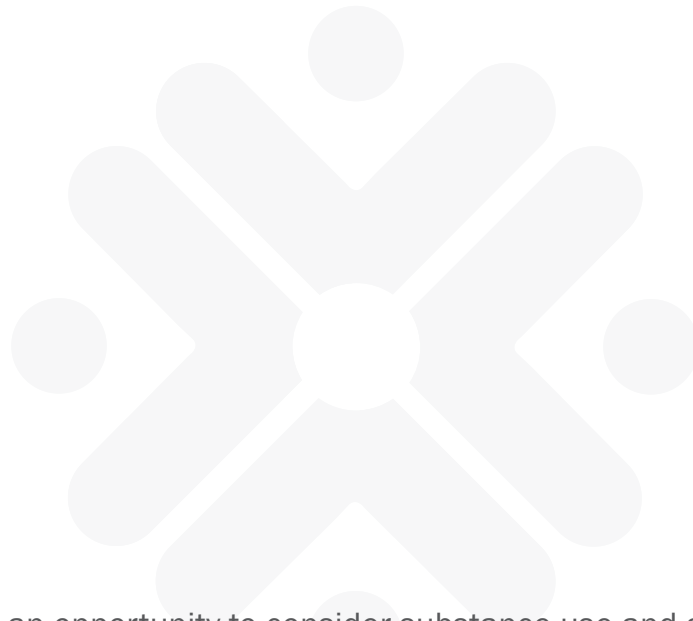
Over the next five years, CCSA will focus on the following two priorities:



## Mobilize collective efforts by connecting and convening stakeholders towards a common goal.

The federally funded network of Pan-Canadian Health Organizations (PCHOs) encompass a wealth of knowledge and data. CCSA will continue to seek opportunities to collaborate with other PCHOs to increase capacity to respond and decrease duplication of effort by working together to achieve impact.

CCSA will strengthen our relationships with public health organizations, not only to bolster the connection between public health issues, policies and initiatives grounded in research, but also to contribute to the improvement of population health more generally. We will collaborate in areas such as community health and wellness, the social determinants of health, and addressing emergencies, such as opioids, methamphetamines and other substance-related and broader public health responses, including COVID-19.



Engaging with youth is an opportunity to consider substance use and addiction from the perspective of prevention and harm reduction efforts. By consulting with and listening to the concerns of youth and young adults, products can be developed that are well-suited to their needs. CCSA will build on the success of products such as *Talking Pot with Youth: A Cannabis Communications Guide for Youth Allies* and the popular interactive website *The High Way Home*, an experiential learning tool based on real-life scenarios that raises youth awareness of the risks and harms associated with cannabis use and driving.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples are forging their own paths towards wellness. CCSA will continue to seek advice from, and welcome opportunities to work with, Indigenous peoples to build on their traditional knowledge and priorities for coordinated action.

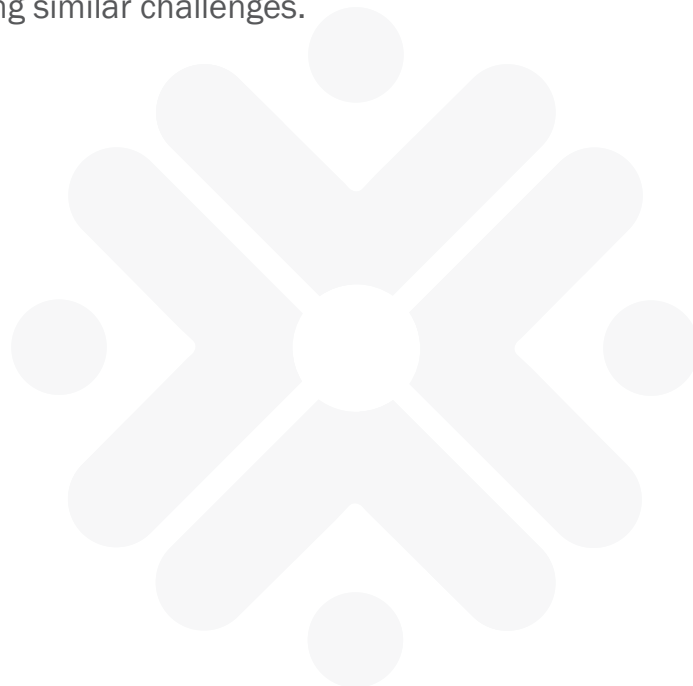


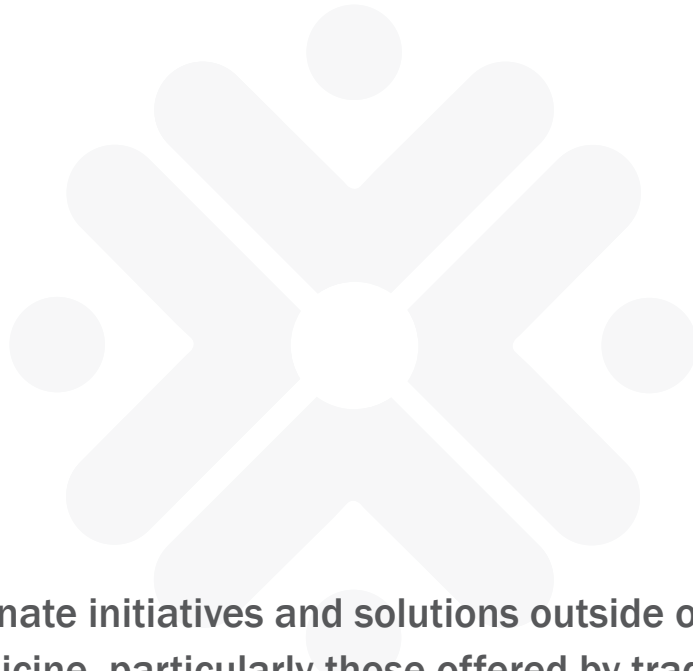
The perspectives of people with lived and living experience with substance use is an important component of the work at CCSA. Those voices, as well as those of the friends and families of people that use or have used alcohol and other drugs, will continue to be heard around the table at CCSA through the Lived and Living Experience and Family and Friends groups and our continuing collaboration with key organizations like the Community Addictions Peer Support Association to ensure that our work remains relevant to those directly affected. Over the next five years, CCSA will pursue additional opportunities to enhance engagement by finding new forms of involvement at key events and working with partners on stigma-related work to incubate and scale up promising initiatives.

## Shine a spotlight on initiatives in the provinces/ territories and communities.

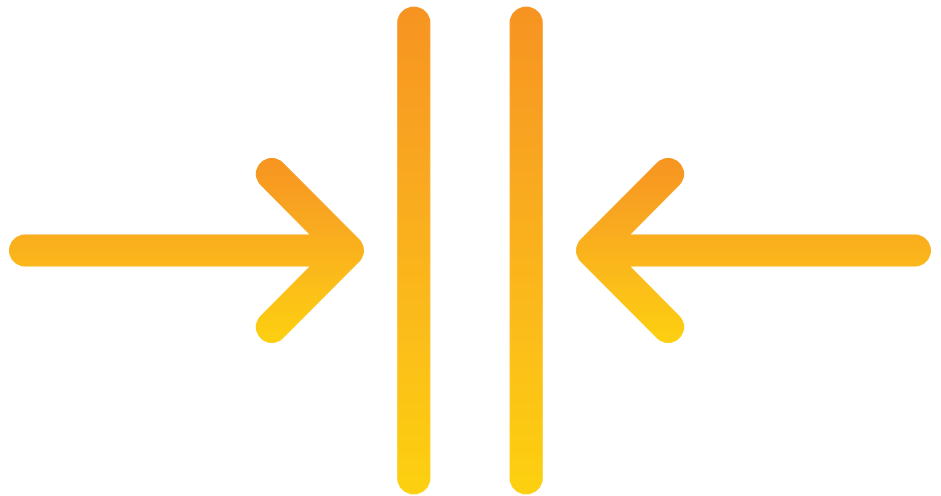
CCSA works collaboratively with provinces, territories and communities across Canada. We have partnered on several successful initiatives focused on stigma, childhood trauma, youth alcohol use and youth treatment. Some examples of these partnerships include the Community of Sherbrooke, the Alberta Family Wellness initiative and the global youth network, Frayme.

CCSA recognizes the value of different but effective practices and research happening at the provincial and territorial level, including needs-based planning and youth hubs. Communities across Canada who are experiencing substance use issues often create their own unique solutions. CCSA works to share and profile unique community approaches to substance use with other communities across the country to amplify techniques and lessons learned so that others can gain further knowledge from those experiencing similar challenges.





**CCSA will illuminate initiatives and solutions outside of Western systems of medicine, particularly those offered by traditional Indigenous knowledge and practice. CCSA will continue to build positive relationships with Canada's Indigenous communities by supporting Indigenous-led solutions and shining a spotlight on these initiatives together with Indigenous leadership. CCSA recognizes the value of traditional knowledge and will share Indigenous practices with broader Canadian audiences.**



## Goal 3

### **Bridging the gap between what we know and what we do**

Over the next five years, CCSA will focus on the following three priorities:



## Equip the substance use field with the knowledge it needs to respond effectively.

CCSA will be a primary point of access for research and leading practices in Canada and around the world regarding substance use services, treatment interventions and supports. We will identify the evidence that already exists and synthesize this information in a format that is more accessible, tailored and easier for our stakeholders to understand and use. CCSA will continue to provide our own research and knowledge synthesis when a shortage of knowledge exists. We will continue to use various communications formats to provide relevant information to Canadians, including reports, events and working groups.





Given the cross-sectoral nature of the subject matter, CCSA will create and co-design educational materials for those working in fields other than substance use, but who require knowledge of substance use and addiction. This group may include family physicians, emergency department staff, and secondary and post-secondary educators, among others.

**We recognize the need in the field for a central repository for information about substance use and addiction. CCSA will act as a go-to network of knowledge on policy, practices, researchers and experts by archiving this information and directing stakeholders to source material. We will strive to make information available as quickly as possible while recognizing the need for evidence, accuracy and reliability.**



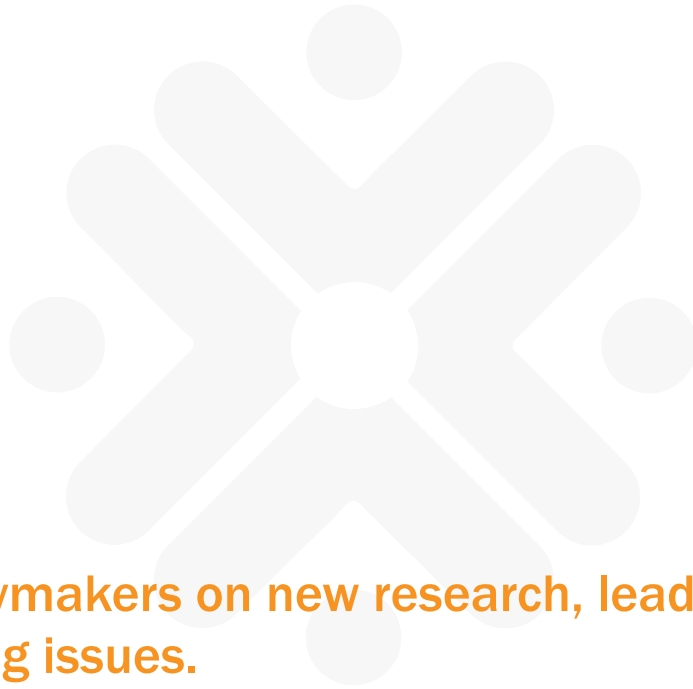
## Serve as an amplifier for news related to substance use and addiction.

CCSA will continue to extend its reach across all jurisdictions in Canada by using various social media platforms and technological approaches. Our digital outreach will amplify our ability to stay in touch and listen more frequently to the voices of our stakeholders, partners and the public across Canada. Using technology to reach and connect improves time efficiencies, considers the resource limitations of some stakeholder groups, and enables us to adapt, evolve and remain in contact with those we serve. Technological solutions will also allow us to reach further into northern, remote and rural communities from coast to coast to coast.

As a recognized convener among governments, business and the not-for-profit sector, CCSA will improve communication and coordination across ministries and sectors to identify knowledge gaps and strengthen the connections between those who could benefit from shared knowledge

**CCSA will promote its existing communication initiatives so that all stakeholders and individual Canadians are aware of the resources currently available and can continue to make informed decisions related to substance use in Canada. We will also further adapt communications materials to better suit specific audience needs.**





## **Inform policymakers on new research, leading practice and emerging issues.**

**CCSA must remain a non-partisan source of objective, evidence-informed knowledge to serve as a reliable and trusted advisor to all levels of government, promoting and assisting in the development of realistic and effective policies and programs to reduce the harms associated with alcohol and other drugs.**

CCSA will continue to identify the issues and provide evidence-informed solutions to current problems. We will advise policy makers using the most current data and deliver this advice clearly and concisely. Our policy recommendations will be practical, actionable and supported by a rigorous fact base and rationale.

CCSA will increase communication and collaboration with Health Canada, Public Safety and the Government of Canada more broadly, and with the provinces and territories to advise on leading practices as policies are implemented across Canada. We are well-positioned to develop widely representative materials by listening to the priorities of the federal and provincial/territorial governments and examining available evidence and the latest challenges in the field.

We are aware that Canadians are having to access private, for-pay community treatment services, many of which are not currently regulated, which places vulnerable people at risk and out-of-pocket for considerable amounts of money. To help inform future policy on system-of-care needs and different delivery models, CCSA will investigate the system of care at large, particularly examining the roles of different providers.





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## The Path Forward

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Our updated strategic goals and priorities form a solid foundation for our direction over the next five years and will inform our business and operating plans. This strategic plan represents our commitment to our partners and is reflective of your needs and priorities and the environment in which we operate. Our plan also reflects our North Star outcomes of an accessible, inclusive continuum of quality services and supports, and evidence-informed responses that reduce substance use harms.

**As Canada faces multiple public health challenges that directly affect those who use substances and their families, CCSA is prepared for change and uncertainty. We are confident that our strategic plan provides the guidance we need to successfully adapt and continue to deliver a healthier Canadian society where evidence informs approaches to substance use and addiction.**

***We listened to you, we learned from you,  
and now it's time we act with you.***



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